

Bioeconomy and Millennial Food Security in the Ecuadorian Amazon, Ecuador

The Challuwa Mikuna Association, from Orellana, Ecuador, redefines food security and sustainability through culinary innovation in its restaurant "Maitos del Yasuní", promoting local development and conservation in the Amazon.



From Hunters to Guardians: The Rebirth of Challuwa Mikuna

The implemented initiative

In Francisco de Orellana province, Ecuador, the Challuwa Mikuna organization stands out as a model of female and community empowerment in the bioeconomy. Originally engaged in the sale of wild products, these Kichwa and Shuar women faced legal restrictions that led them to shift their focus towards sustainable gastronomy. With support from the Ministry

of Environment, the Ministry of Tourism of Ecuador, UNDP, and the "Indigenous Amazon: Rights and Resources (AIRR)" project funded by USAID, they have enhanced the "Maitos del Yasuní" restaurant. This establishment focuses on preserving ancestral Amazonian cuisine, introducing gourmet dishes with local ingredients such as white cocoa and chonta.

The Success of Maitos del Yasuní

The technological solution

The Challuwa Mikuna Association, transformed by the Yasuní Program and the Indigenous Amazon: Rights and Resources project, is a clear example of how innovation and cooperation can change communities. Previously sustained by the informal sale of wild animal meat, this practice, threatening biodiversity, led to sanctions from the Ecuadorian Ministry of Environment. With training and financing, they transformed into a reference for Kichwa gourmet cuisine, highlighting the Maitos del Yasuní restaurant, aligned with environmental

conservation and respect for wildlife. This transformation positively impacted the local economy, creating jobs and strengthening the economy with a diversified gastronomic offer. Socially, the project revitalized the social and cultural fabric, empowering women and strengthening cultural identity. Additionally, it promotes sustainability by aligning with five Sustainable Development Goals, demonstrating that it is possible to turn challenges into sustainable and beneficial opportunities.

5 TRAINING

+25% PRODUCTIVITY

Innovation and Tradition



MÁS INFO



Results

The ambition of Challuwa Mikuna to expand into other Amazonian provinces presents challenges that require investments, cultural adaptation, and advanced logistics. To overcome these challenges, the organization employs a multifaceted approach that includes continuous training, community empowerment, menu diversification, and collaboration with governmental entities and NGOs. Strengthening technical and operational capacities through strategic alliances is

essential to address future challenges. Challuwa Mikuna's success, anchored in bioeconomy principles and empowerment, serves as a model for sustainable development, although replicating this model elsewhere requires specific adaptations and a solid understanding of local regulations. Moreover, effective promotion and the formation of strategic alliances are crucial to scale and adapt the model in new markets, ensuring its sustainability and long-term legacy.